

Remarks/Arguments

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the courtesy of a telephone interview on November 8, 2006 wherein the subject invention was discussed and contrasted with US2003/0065949 to Le and US2002/0013739 to O'Donnell.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the features of claim 2 and in so doing make a clarifying amendment to the language from claim 2 (i.e., changing "proper security authorization" to "security authorization to modify said portion"). Claim 1 has also been amended to delete the words "at least" so that the clarifying amendment is properly anteceded.

This application has five independent claims: claims 1, 8, 13, 14, and 15. The Examiner rejected each of these claims as obvious over Le in view of O'Donnell and further in view of US2002/0062280 to Zachariassen.

Le notes the following. "In attempting to automate and standardize processes, numerous transportation service providers have developed automated processes within their areas of expertise. Such efforts have produced tax services, shipment tracking services, customs invoicing services, duty calculation services, customs classification services, import regulation services, export regulation services, and a large host of other applications." (Paragraph 6.) Then, in his summary of the invention, he states the following. "The invention features an application server module,

being configured to selectively send data to, receive data from, and/or share data between the service engines. The application server module uses this data passing and sharing to selectively operate the service engines and integrate their separate services into an integrated service. Any number of users having needed of the integrated service can request the integrated service by accessing the application server module via an interface module.” (Paragraph 11.)

Thus, Le provides an application server which integrates a variety of legacy service engines and provides users with a common interface to use the services. As described, one of these engines is an export engine (paragraph 76) and another is an import engine (paragraph 82).

As such, Le does not have “a database” with “records”, “where each record ... includes data... to process a step of exporting of a product... and...to process a step of importing of said product”, as required by each of the independent claims. Indeed, with a separate (legacy) import engine and export engine integrated by a server, there is no purpose in providing any such database. Thus, even if the other references relied upon by the Examiner supplied such a database (which is not admitted), there could be no motivation to add it to the system of Le.

Yet further, the integrated database in the invention of the subject independent claims provides an advantage over Le. More specifically, in Le, the application server must be designed to interoperate with a number of different service engines which, as suggested by Le (at paragraph

6), may be implemented by various different service providers. As such, the operator of the Le system would have no control over changes being made to any of these service engines. Thus, it may be expected that ongoing maintenance of Le's system would be difficult. In contrast, the integrated system of the subject invention avoids the difficulties attendant upon maintaining a system reliant upon third party systems. In this regard, the integrated database of the invention not only avoids interoperability problems, but it also permits better control over data quality (consistency and accuracy), less likelihood of duplication of data elements, and is more easily deployed.

Claim 1 also requires an "interface allowing said at least one client to modify a portion of a record ... if said member associated with said client has security authorization to modify said portion", claim 8 requires "determining whether said instruction to modify relates to a portion of said one of said records for which said member has modification authority", and the other independent claims have similar requirements. Le mentions a "web agent that limits the general types of tasks that each user is allowed to conduct" and that "the application server ... limits access to the particular sub-functions and information for which the user has approved access." (Paragraph 42.)

It is therefore submitted that Le has no clear teaching of the claimed feature. And this makes sense: unlike the subject invention, Le does not create a record with both import and export information, which record could be expected to be used by a series of different organisations while goods are in the process of being shipped across borders. Consequently, Le would not need to control which portions of a record could be modified by a given user.

The Examiner also relies on Zachariassen which states "The End User may choose to have a portion of the transaction realized in a handover of cash or goods" (paragraph 134). It is submitted that this also provides no clear teaching of the claimed feature.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that the independent claims patentably define over the art of record. That being so, the remaining claims which depend from one or other of the independent claims also patentably define over the art of record.

In view of the foregoing, early favourable consideration of this application is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



Ronald D. Faggetter
Registration No.33,345

SMART & BIGGAR
438 University Avenue
Suite 1500, Box 111
Toronto, Canada M5G 2K8
Telephone: (416) 593-5514
Facsimile: (416) 591-1690